

✓ Bay Area

# HEALTH LIBERATION

## NEWS bay area

Medical Committee for Human Rights  
Bay Area Chapter  
P.O. Box 7677  
San Francisco, Ca. 94119

Issue 4 February, 1972

U. C. SAN FRANCISCO

OCT 11 1972

### WASH D.C. FREE CLINIC CONFERENCE

ON January 14-17 in Washington D.C., the national free clinic Council held its second conference. This meeting was organized by David Smith, the founder of the Haight Ashbury clinic, and his fourteen hand picked board members. These were largely professional, all male and white. The Pfizer drug company had a representative on the board. Those clinics which could afford to send representatives to Wash. D. C. attended the conference. The conference was paid for by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals (24,000) and HEW (13,000). It was held at the Shoreham Hotel, an elegant convention hall.

The most critical debate concerned the political stance of free clinics vis-a-vis established health care institutions. The organizers of the NFCC feel that free clinics should become an integral part of the established health care system. People from other clinics and many MCHR members, however, have been working and organizing free clinics as an alternative and a challenge to existing medical institutions. As the conference progressed it became more and more apparent to the participants that NFCC was working in conjunction with DHEW with its goal being political and economic control of the free clinics. On the third day, a previously negotiated million dollar contract with Nixon's special action office on drug abuse, was revealed. This government money would be controlled and distributed by NFCC according to its guidelines. It would be up to the decisions of the executive committee who would receive these funds. It became clear at this time that the entire conference was organized to legitimize NFCC and centralize control of the free medicine movement. This million dollar contract has yet to be signed by the NFCC.

Many health workers who attended the conference were dissatisfied and angered by the obvious manipulation of David Smith, HEW, and the drug companies. There was, however, an excitement generated by the communications finally being established between radical health workers from all over the country. A full account of this conference can be obtained through Health Pac, Feb. issue, or by sending one dollar to P.O. Box 7677 S.F. with a request for more info. Some of those who finally reluctantly took positions on the NFCC will be struggling with these issues of control, and funding in the next month. Free clinics throughout the country are waking up to the political implications of government involvement and the government is waking up to the threat which independent free medical facilities poses to an established profit industry.

### BAY AREA CLINICS MEET

This past Saturday, Feb. 12, members of 20 different Free Clinics met at Glide Memorial Church to begin communication between the clinics, resource sharing, and discussion of the relation of Free Clinics to the existing medical complex. Many disturbing issues had been raised at the National Free Clinic Conference and people wanted to begin discussing these with other clinics. Workshops were held on education, politics, resource sharing, and communication.

People in the education workshop felt that not enough is being done in the area of preventive health care. Certainly, the public health departments are not providing these services. The problem of the crisis-oriented nature of the Free Clinics, and methods and problems involved in meeting the need for preventive care were discussed.

The politics workshop was very exciting as people for the first time began to share experiences and ideas about the



direction of the Free Clinic movement. Issues of worker and community control of the clinics themselves were discussed, with different clinics sharing their problems and successes. There is a great difference in who controls each clinic--doctors? community people? influence from a university or sponsoring agency? People felt that everything should be done to include the surrounding community in all aspects of the clinic.

Further discussion in the politics workshop centered around the issue of community control of health institutions which primarily serve interests outside of the communities in which they are located. People felt that Free Clinics should be playing a leading role in opening up these institutions to public control and utilization. Clinics mustn't overrate the amount of care they are able to give with limited funds, volunteer help, and small facilities. Rather, the importance of the whole social scope of health must be recognized as a final result of poverty, poor housing, poor nutrition, inadequate transportation to health facilities, and quality of inner-city life. It was felt that Free Clinics could serve as a token example of the kind of humane and good health care that could be dispensed in a worker-community controlled environment. This is a worthwhile goal to struggle towards.

A rough statement to express the consensus of the workshops was endorsed by the entire group. It stated that "health care institutions monopolize the means of production of health care (knowledge, equipment, hospitals, personnel) and pursue profit to the detriment of the health of the people they purport to serve... health care needs are inseparable from the broader social needs of the people including housing, employment, transportation...we believe that the American health care delivery system must be re-oriented toward providing health care rather than pursuing profits." Demands should be placed on existing health care institutions for "emergency, inpatient, and outpatient care to the poor regardless of their ability to pay or show medical insurance. That hiring and training of minority and poor people in the immediate community take place...that all institutions be refused funding until they meet the health needs in the communities in which they exist, have fully community-controlled representative boards..." This was a preliminary statement of common goals, and further meetings were set up to continue such discussions between Bay Area Free Clinics. People left feeling elated with the day's activities and a feeling that a united Free Clinic movement for the Bay Area had begun.

## GEORGE JACKSON CLINIC

On April 24, 1971, the George Jackson People's Free Health Clinic, originally the Bobby Seale People's Free Health Clinic, opened in the predominantly Black community of South Berkeley. The People's Free Health Clinic is one of many "survival programs" sponsored by the Black Panther Party. Its purpose, like all the other survival programs of the Black Panther Party, is to ensure the most basic right of all people to exist, or survive. We are most times forced to either pay for or be denied our basic human rights, the right to eat, to have clothing, shelter, proper medical care, etc. Medical care, absolutely free of charge, is a means to ensure the people's survival.

Presently, the People's Free Health Clinic is open seven days a week, from 10 A.M. - 10 P.M. Clinical services include general medicine, pediatrics, podiatry, minor surgery, pregnancy tests, tests and treatment for venereal diseases, Sickle Cell Disease screening and other basic laboratory tests. Free referrals are available for optometry, urology, gynecology, orthopedics and psychiatry. Another facility of the clinic is a Free Pharmacy from which we are able to provide many various medications and fill prescriptions free of charge. The Clinic staff consists of doctors, nurses, lab technicians and receptionists. All of these people donate their services. Unfortunately, we are unable to completely staff each clinic session. To date, the George Jackson People's Free Health Clinic has provided free medical care for approximately 2,000 people.

Preventive medicine is also an important part of the George Jackson People's Free Clinic. Our primary concern is, in fact, to prevent illness and disease, rather than wait until a person is sick to provide medical care. Due to the little or no educational and preventive screening work done by the present medical care system, people often suffer unnecessarily from sickness and disease that could have been prevented. As a major part of the preventive medical program, Sickle Cell Disease screening is done not only at the clinic, but at various community locations, in particular, at nearby churches. Sickle Cell Disease is a blood disorder prevalent in Black people, of which one out of every 10 are carriers (Sickle Cell Trait) and one out of every 400 have the fatal Sickle Cell Anemia. People tested by the Sickle Cell Disease Screening Program who have a positive result are given the follow-up testing also (hemoglobin electrophoresis) through the George Jackson People's Free Health Clinic. The Sickle Cell Disease Screening program not only



provides a free medical test, but serves as an educational tool. The Sickie Cell Disease Screening Program is also part of the Sickie Cell Anemia Research Foundation, the chairman of which is Dr. Bert Small, a physician at the Clinic.

The Clinic also provides survival kits for emergency first aid, which are often distributed in the community at various functions such as the People's Free Clothing Program and People's Free Food Give-Away. Since the opening of the clinic, over three thousand survival kits have been distributed. In addition to all of this, plans are now being made to expand the Preventative Medicine Program to include health campaigns, such as door-to-door testing for Sickie Cell Disease and other health problems common in the Black community.

To encourage and develop increased community participation in the George Jackson People's Free Health Clinic, medical training sessions are held weekly. Present classes involve laboratory technician training of community volunteers.

Because of the growing participation and enthusiasm of the community for the Clinic, which now averages a patient attendance of twenty-five to thirty people per day, the Clinic facilities are being expanded. Not only does the volunteer staff need to be increased, but to help make the clinic a greater service to the people, supplies, such as examining tables, office furniture, basic laboratory technician training

oratory equipment, and medicine cabinets, etc. are needed. Anyone interested in helping the George Jackson People's Free Health Clinic provide more services should contact: George Jackson People's Free Health Clinic; 3236 Adeline Street; South Berkeley, California 94703; or call (415) 653-2534.

TO DENY MEDICAL CARE IS TO DENY  
THE RIGHT TO LIVE.

## HIDDEN HUNGERS

No doctor or scientist can deny that the health and development of every cell in the body depends on the nutrition it receives throughout its life cycle. Scientists have spent life times experimenting in their laboratories with live animals, proving time and again that the lack of vital nutritional elements or the substitution of those elements with drugs causes disease and death. Scientists have proven that prevention of disease depends to a great extent on nutrition. Yet doctors almost

never use this large body of knowledge in the treatment of their patients.

Why are American mothers and babies dying because of fetal and maternal malnutrition during pregnancy? Why must our infants suffer from central nervous system damage because of malnutrition before they are born? Our infant mortality rate, 14th in the world, is rising in many parts of our country. Why are physicians treating pregnant mothers, who become overweight from bad nutrition, with dangerous low calorie diets and diuretic drugs which rob them of essential foods and body fluids when they need them most? Recent findings by the National Research Council Committee On Maternal Nutrition reported that such practices "could contribute to lower birth weight and a greater number of still births."

Infants who receive a half cup of commercially canned meats and vegetables daily have been found to have the highest amount of sodium in their blood ever recorded in man; an amount that their kidneys are too immature to excrete. In an experiment Dr. L.K. Dahl conducted, baby rats developed high blood pressure and died within four months after being fed canned baby food. Doctors' research has proved the relationship of the sodium intake to high blood pressure in all age groups; the higher the intake, the earlier and more numerous are deaths from hypertension. In spite of these findings, the sodium in canned baby foods has not been decreased, and pediatricians are still advising young mothers to feed them to their infant children.

Experiments conducted by Dr. Abraham Hoffer of Canada showed that 75% of apparently hopeless schizophrenic patients recovered when supplied with a highly nutritious diet, particularly the B-complex vitamins, including niacinamide.

Nutritionist Adele Davis states "It will someday be recognized that our disgraceful crime rate, our tremendous loss from suicides and our millions of alcoholics are in part brought on by food industries, which, ignoring health, flood the market with overrefined and over processed products designed merely to make money.....like so-called enriched flour from which 24 nutrients are removed during refining and about one third of the original amount of iron, Vitamin B, and niacin are replaced. Such flour is 'enriched' just as you would be enriched by someone stealing 24 dollars and returning 99 cents."



Costs for this processing, refining, and robbing of nutrients are passed on to the community who suffer not only loss in purchasing power for needed high quality proteins, vitamins minerals, trace elements and fatty acids but loss of these health and life preserving nutrients in the high cost foods they are forced to buy.

Why are doctors and scientists silent when our soils and foods are robbed of the nutrients necessary to life and health? Many foods are priced beyond the reach of those who need them most.

Why the astonishing contradiction in medical, scientific and health agencies which claim to be the only authentic guardians of national health, yet show a total lack of concern for those basic nutritional needs necessary to maintain health and prevent and cure disease?

It cannot be because of ignorance. Although they know the serious state of malnutrition among infants, pregnant women, and senior citizens in San Francisco, The Public Health Department has dispensed with their very limited Nutrition Services! Much more is known about the high priced drugs which are so liberally dispensed and often prove both harmful and deadly to their patients.

Medical workers have the special responsibility to speak out and campaign against this conspiracy of silence to expose the large Food and Drug Monopolies and to force the medical, scientific and health agencies to speak out and act against these genocidal practices conducted for profit.

We must ask, as Adele Davis does, "How much longer are we going to allow the greed of the few to impose ill health on the many?"

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROJECT

With employers literally getting away with murder in many jobs, there is a real urgency in dealing now with health and safety problems of industrial workers. Nationally, MCHR has given this high priority (Occupational Health Project), and in several cities intensive local organizing is now occurring. On Saturday, March 11, the Labor Committee of the National Lawyers Guild and MCHR are co-sponsoring an all-day conference on this subject. The proposed agenda will include the politics of industrial safety and proposals towards solutions to the problems/ Those interested in attending the conference and/or working on the local industrial project should call the MCHR answering service at 626-2246.

## MCHR CALENDAR

MCHR bi-weekly Educational Meetings  
Thursday nights at 7:30  
Held at 2519 Pacific St., S.F.

March 2 Our role in Medical War  
Crimes Tribunal to be held  
at the Republican Nat. Convention in San Diego

March 16 San Francisco General Hosp.  
March 30 Occupational Health

Occupational Health Conference  
will be March 11, call 626-2246  
for location.

National MCHR Convention in Chicago  
will be April 27-30. More details  
next issue.

---

Medical Committee for Human Rights  
Bay Area Chapter  
P.O. Box 7677  
San Francisco, Ca. 94119

Issue 4 February, 1972

---

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
PERMIT No. 9641  
SAN FRANCISCO  
CALIFORNIA

---

Rec'd Archives

AUG 15 1975